

St. John's UCC, Fullerton

575 Grape Street ☩ Whitehall PA 18052
www.stjohnsuccfullerton.org ☩ 610-264-8421



**We Worship, We Love, We Serve
– No Matter What!**



**December 28, 2024
First Sunday after Christmas
9:30 am**

We Worship

Welcome to St. John's UCC, Fullerton!

*We are proudly an Open & Affirming (ONA) Congregation
of the Penn NE Conference United Church of Christ!
You are WELCOME HERE!*

Our Offering is received as we gather for worship, with plates located on pedestals at the back. We graciously accept your gifts of praise and gratitude to God, to be presented during the service. While guests are welcome to contribute, please know there is no obligation; the financial support of our church is primarily the responsibility of our congregation members.

Sunday Social is a time to gather for light refreshments and connection time, to visit, make new friends and build relationships. Join us in Fox Hall following worship each Sunday, hosted by various congregants and groups.

Children's Faith Formation begins in the early part of our worship service in the sanctuary, including the Children's Message. Parents are asked to accompany their child if they are at the kids' table in the back. On Communion Sundays, the children remain in the worship service.

*** Those who are comfortably able, please stand**

Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Steven Davis

***Greeting and Sharing the Peace of Christ**

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you!

Music to Prepare our Hearts for Worship

Carol of the Bells
Arr. by Jason Krug

Bells of St. John's

***Call to Worship**

Liturgist: Tyler Shankweiler

One: Christ is born; give him glory!

All: Christ has come down from heaven; receive him!

One: All people on earth, sing to the Lord!

All: Let our hearts be filled with rejoicing, for eternal salvation has appeared on the earth!

*Opening Hymn #193

Sing We Now of Christmas

Prayer of Confession

Liturgist: Tyler Shankweiler

One: O God, you search us out and know us. All we are is open to you. We confess that we have fallen short of our expectations and yours.

All: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us

One: When we make no room for Christ, and fail to welcome him into our lives,

All: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us

One: When we follow shooting stars and squander our gifts in Herod's court,

All: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us

One: When we seek to cut down those who might rise above us,

All: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us

One: When we sanitize your birthplace and erase from memory the poor and displaced,

All: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us

One: When we sing sweet sentiments of Christ's birth, and fail to rejoice over his everyday presence,

All: In your mercy, Lord, forgive us

One: We turn to you, O Christ, perfect union of Spirit and flesh;

All: We renounce evil; we claim your love; we choose to be made whole.

(Time for Silent Prayer)

Prayer Response

"It Came Upon A Midnight Clear" - Verse 1

**It came upon a midnight clear, that glorious song of old;
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.
"Peace on the earth good-will to all, from heaven's all gracious
King": The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.**

Assurance of Forgiveness

Liturgist: Tyler Shankweiler

One: The God of Christmas, the God of unimaginable grace, forgives and renews us all! Our lives declare the wonders of God's Holy Love, calling us out of darkness into glorious light.

All: Through the joy of the newborn king, we are forgiven and loved. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Prayer Response *"It Came Upon A Midnight Clear" - Verse 3*

**For lo, the days are hastening on, By prophets seen of old,
When with the ever circling years, Shall come the time foretold,
When peace shall over all the earth, Its ancient splendors fling;
And all the world give back the song Which now the angels sing.**

Children's Message

Rev. Davis and
Samantha Kistler

Children and youth are welcome to come up to the chancel steps.

Hymn # 203

Away in a Manger
All Verses

***Scripture Reading**

Colossians 3:12-17

Scripture Reader: Sharon Czekner

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son." When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi.

Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more." When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee.

There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazarene."

One: The word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Hymn # 180

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Verses 1 and 2

Sermon

Rev. Steven Davis

Christmas Tapestry by Patricia Polacco

Song of Praise

Lullaby

John Ness Beck

*A child, a holy child, fast asleep beneath a winter sky,
is warm at rest at his mother's breast as she sings her lullaby.*

*The lambs, the cattle too are sleeping in a bed of hay,
and all around there's no other sound than lullaby, lullay.*

*Lullaby, sleep well, sleep well, my precious one;
lullaby my love, my only son; New life has now begun.
So the story goes, once upon a winter morn a tiny boy bringing love and joy,
the Prince of Peace was born.*

We Love

Pastoral Prayer and Prayers of the People

Rev. Davis
& Samantha Kistler

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen**

Offering Our Gifts, Tithes and Offerings to God



Thank you for your generosity and faithfulness in supporting the ministry of St. John's UCC!

*Doxology

Christmas Doxology

(tune: *United Methodist Hymnal* no. 229)

G D G C D⁷ G

Glo-ry be to God the Fa-ther, glo-ry be to Christ the Son, glo-ry

D G C D⁷ G C Am

to the Ho-ly Spir-it, glo-ry to the Three-in-One. Here we of-fer to you

D Bm Em Am D C

glad-ly all the gifts that you im-part, as we

G C D⁷ Em C G C D⁷ G

glo-ry in your Pre-sence, giv-ing from a grate-ful heart.

WORDS: Brenda J. Heard
MUSIC: Traditional Polish melody

W ZLOBIE LEZY
8.7.8.7.8.8.7.

*Prayer of Dedication

Liturgist: Tyler Shankweiler

All: Steadfast God of refuge and promise, even when the world makes no room, even when fear seems stronger than hope, you are with us. Receive these gifts, O God, as signs of our willingness to make room for your kingdom among us. Use what we bring to heal what is broken, to protect the vulnerable, and to embody your saving love. In the name of Jesus, our Light in the shadows. Amen.

We Serve

***Sending Hymn: # 179**

Joy to the World
Verses 1, 2, and 4

***The Benediction**

Rev. Davis

Postlude

Patrick Sandt, Director of Music

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Flower Sponsorship for December 28th

In memory of Robert Sherman, Sr.
by Bobby and Wayne Sherman and Margaret Baatz

Attendance – December 21

Onsite – 93 Online – 42

Our Worship & Faith Formation Sunday Schedule

8:15am Friendship Class

9:30am Worship/Faith Formation: Holy Moly

10:30am Sunday Social

First Sunday after Christmas, December 28

Lectionary Readings

Isaiah 63:7-9 and Psalm 148

Hebrews 2:10-18 and Matthew 2:13-23

Serving in Worship Leadership

Liturgist: Tyler Shankweiler

Scripture Reader: Sharon Czekner

Worship Tech: Bill Castello

Altar Guild: Kim Hillegass

Usher: Carole O'Connell

Greeter: Sherri Gangewere

Feast of the Epiphany, January 4

Lectionary Readings

Isaiah 60:1-6 and Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Ephesians 3:1-12 and Matthew 2:1-12

Serving in Worship Leadership

Liturgist: Regi Mohr

Scripture Reader: Sharon Antrim

Worship Tech: Bill Castello

Altar Guild: Corrina Purdon

Greeters and Ushers: Tom and Kay Chryst, Wendy Fox, Kirby Hower, Kathy Roth

IN OUR PRAYERS

Please remember in your prayers all those who are ill, in our area hospitals, or otherwise in need of prayer: Shirley Abel, Phyllis Ambearle, Grace Arnold, Margaret and Richard Baatz, Christina Bach, Clarence Biehn, Sherry Castello (Bill's mom), Rob Czekner, Marion DeMilio, Janet and Jim Ebert, Keith Fox, Gus Geissinger, Gary George, Sally Gibson, Sandy Glass and Tracey Glass, Mike Gravely, Donna Held, Ray and JoAnn Hower, Geraldine Keim, Jean McGonigle, Karen Moyer, Molly Nicholas, Joey Raszler, Bert Smith, Leona Snyder, Barry Stephens and Rev. Becca Stephens, Martha Strauss, and George Williams.

Prayers for the family of Bob Bold who died on December 22nd. The service will be January 3 at the Heintzelman Funeral Home: Visitation at 1:00 pm, service at 3:00 pm.

Prayers for the family of Shirley Abel, who died on December 22. The services will be held tomorrow at St. John's, with visitation at 10:00 am and the funeral at 11:00. Interment will follow and return for lunch in Fox Hall.

Continued prayers for those in our military, especially Dominic DeMilio, Kaden Rossanese, and Nathan Unger.

If you or a family member is admitted to the hospital, tell them you are a member of St. John's or use the church code, 473. To add someone to our prayer list please contact the Church Office.

INCLEMENT WEATHER NOTICES

If inclement weather requires cancellation of Sunday services, notices will be on Channel 69 news or www.wfmz.com/weather/stormcenter.

THE CHRISTMAS FUND

For over 100 years, The Christmas Fund has provided direct financial assistance to UCC ministers, church workers, and their families with emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities, health premiums, and Christmas "thank you" gift checks to our lower-income retirees. Special offering envelopes will be received on Sunday, December 21, and for the entire month of December.

GROCERY OPPORTUNITIES – GIANT, WEIS & REDNER'S

Buy Giant and Weis gift cards and the church receives 5% back. Also good for purchasing gas. Get your gift cards from the office or by seeing Tom Moyer & Carol Raszler every Sunday. Save the register tapes from Redner's and the church receives 1% back. A collection jar for the tapes is on the table in the lounge area or see Karen Stoitsits. Please do not roll the Redner's tapes and do not include other stores' receipts.

WHITEHALL FOOD PANTRY

We continue collecting boxed or packaged stuffing mixes for the month of December. Monetary donations are always accepted along with any other food donations. They can be placed in the shopping cart found in the coatroom area next to the sanctuary. Volunteers for the food pantry are needed for the 4th Monday of every month from 9:00am to 11:30am and from 5:30pm to 8:00pm. at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church located at 3900 Mechanicsville Rd. in Whitehall. Contact Gary Black at 484-274-2405 or email at gary.t.black@outlook.com to volunteer.

LEHIGH VALLEY SAVEAROUND BOOKS 2026 ARE HERE

This coupon book, good for all of 2026, contains discount offers for restaurants, hotels, car rentals, entertainment venues, amusement parks, clothing, food, and much more. Cost is \$25

GRIEF SUPPORT ~ HEALTHCARE MINISTRY

If you're grieving the loss of a loved one, you are invited to attend a monthly daytime grief support group at Asbury UMC, 1533 Springhouse Rd., Allentown. Rev. Evelyn Stupp, Asbury's Pastor of Bereavement and Care Ministries, leads the group. For more information and to indicate your interest in attending, please contact her at estupp@asburylv.org or 610-428-9095.

BUS TRIP TO SIGHT AND SOUND: "JOSHUA"

Wednesday, June 3, 2026. Bus leaves St. John's at 8am for 11am show. After the show we will enjoy a lunch buffet at Yoder's restaurant in nearby New Holland, PA. Cost of trip, including chartered bus, downstairs theater tickets, lunch buffet, and tips is \$150 per person. (Children may be a little cheaper.) Because we need to know how many are interested in this trip, we ask that you make your reservations

ASAP. Please include a \$75 deposit with each reservation, and give to Tom Moyer or Carol Raszler.

APPLEBEES BURGERS FOR A CAUSE

Now available! Applebee's burger gift cards are good for any burgers on their menu (Some cost over \$17.00), for the price of \$10 per card. The certificates never expire and are good at Applebee's in our area. They make great stocking stuffers! See Carol Raszler or Tom Moyer to purchase these certificates.

ANNUAL REPORTS

It's that time of year again to begin working on the Annual Report. The due date for your report to be in the office is January 5th. The theme is "We Worship, We Love, We Serve-No Matter What!"

MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

The Men's Breakfast Group of St. John's meets at the Hamilton Family Restaurant located at 2027 Hamilton St. in Allentown. Our next meeting is on January 3 at 8:30 am. We would be pleased to have you join us. If you would like to know more about this group, talk to Pastor Steve.

CHURCH CALENDAR **FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 28 – JANUARY 4**

Sun 12/28	8:15 am	Adult Faith Formation
		Friendship Class
	9:30 am	Worship – Second Sunday of Advent
	10:30 am	Social Hour
Wed 12/31	9:00 am	Verso Chat
	12 noon	Painting Group
	6:00 pm	Painting Group
	7:00 pm	SAA Recovery Group
Thurs 1/1		Office Closed – New Year’s Day
Fri 1/2	5:00 pm	St. George Church School
Sat 1/3	8:30 am	Men’s Breakfast
	9:30 am	Zumba
Sun 1/4	8:15 am	Adult Faith Formation
		Friendship Class
	9:30 am	Worship – Epiphany
	9:30 am	Faith Formation
	10:30 am	Social Hour

OUR STAFF

Senior Pastor	Rev. Steve Davis srpastor@sjuccf.org
Director of Music	Patrick Sandt music@sjuccf.org
Ministry Intern	Samantha “Sam” Kistler samanthamkistler@gmail.com
Office Administrator	Alison Berger Boor officesecretary@sjuccf.org
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